

What is claimed is:

1. A system for digitizing a freehand graphic, the system comprising:
a base including:
a surface;
on the surface, a position-coding pattern detectable by an optical sensor;
a first area of the surface; and
a second area of the surface;
a drawing device having an optical sensor functional to detect a position in the position-coding pattern; and
a microprocessor adapted to perform the following actions:
determining if the position detected by the optical sensor is in the first area or the second area;
if the position is in the first area of the surface, then interpreting the position as a point in the freehand graphic; and
if the position is in the second area of the surface, then interpreting the position as a selection of a property for the freehand graphic.
2. The system of claim 1, wherein the drawing device includes the microprocessor.
3. The system of claim 1, wherein the microprocessor resides externally of the drawing device.

4. The system of claim 1, further comprising a cellular phone, and wherein the cellular phone includes the microprocessor.

5. The system of claim 1, further comprising a display to indicate a property selected from the second area.

6. A base enabling the digitization of a freehand graphic, the base comprising:

a surface;

on the surface, a position-coding pattern detectable by an optical sensor;

a first area of the surface; and

a second area of the surface visually distinct from the first area.

7. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area is physically separated from the first area.

8. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas.

9. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas, and at least one of the sub-areas comprises a label representing a property for a freeform graphic.

10. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas, and at least one of the sub-areas comprises an indication of a property for a freeform graphic.

11. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas, and at least one of the sub-areas comprises an indication of a color for a freeform graphic.

12. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas, and at least one of the sub-areas comprises an indication of a line thickness for a freeform graphic.

13. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas, and at least one of the sub-areas comprises an indication of a type of line for a freeform graphic.

14. The base of claim 6, wherein the second area includes a plurality of visually distinct sub-areas, and at least one of the sub-areas comprises an indication of a layer for deposition of a freeform graphic.

15. A drawing device for digitally creating a freeform graphic, the drawing device comprising:

an optical sensor for detecting a position in a position-coding pattern on a surface; and

a microprocessor adapted to perform the following actions:

determining if the position detected by the optical sensor is in a first area of the surface;

if the position is in the first area, then interpreting the position as a point in the freehand graphic;

determining if the position detected by the optical sensor is in a second area of the surface; and

if the position is in the second area, then interpreting the position as a selection of a property for the freehand graphic.

16. The drawing device of claim 15, wherein the microprocessor is further adapted to assign a time-stamp to the position detected by the optical sensor.

17. The drawing device of claim 15, wherein the microprocessor is further adapted to determine an order in which the position was detected relative to other positions detected by the optical sensor.

18. A method for digitizing a freehand graphic, the method comprising:

receiving a position indicator detected on a position-coding pattern by an optical sensor as the optical sensor moves over a surface;

determining if a position corresponding to the position indicator lies in a first area of the surface;

if the position lies in the first area, then interpreting the position as defining part of the freehand graphic;

determining if the position corresponding to the position indicator lies in a second area of the surface; and

if the position lies in the second area, then determining a property for the freehand graphic.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising assigning a time-stamp to the position corresponding to the position indicator.

20. The method of claim 18, further comprising determining an order in which the position indicator was detected relative to other positions detected by the optical sensor.

21. The method of claim 18, wherein determining a property for the freehand graphic comprises:

determining a sub-area of the second area in which the position lies; and

determining that the property for the freehand graphic comprises a property represented by the sub-area.

22. The method of claim 18, further comprising if the position lies in the second area, then displaying a portion of the freehand graphic drawn after determining the property for the freehand graphic in visual accordance with the property.

23. The method of claim 18, further comprising if the position lies in the second area, then after determining the property for the freehand graphic, applying the property determined to all portions of the freehand graphic created until a new property for the freehand graphic is selected.

24. The method of claim 18, further comprising if the position lies in the second area, then displaying a portion of the freehand graphic drawn before determining the property for the freehand graphic in visual accordance with the property.

25. The method of claim 18, wherein the property is selected from the group consisting of color, line thickness, line type, and layer.

26. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the method of claim 18.

27. A computer system adapted to perform the method of claim 18.

28. A method for digitizing a freehand graphic, the method comprising:
receiving from an optical sensor an indicator of a position in a selection
area of a position-coding pattern;
determining a visual property mapped to the position in the selection area;
and
until a new indicator of a position in the selection area of the position-
coding pattern is received, applying the visual property to portions of the freehand
graphic thereafter drawn by movement of the optical sensor over a drawing area
of the position-coding pattern.

29. The method of claim 28, further comprising displaying an indication
of the visual property when it is being applied.

30. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable
instructions for performing the method of claim 28.

31. A base enabling the digitization of a freehand graphic, the base comprising:

a surface;

on the surface, a position-coding pattern detectable by an optical sensor;

a first area of the surface;

a second area of the surface having no overlap with the first area;

the second area having a plurality of sub-areas; and

at least one of the plurality of sub-areas having a visual indicator representing specific information a user can submit to a computer system by moving a drawing device including the optical sensor over the at least one of the plurality of sub-areas.

32. The method of claim 31, wherein the visual indicator comprises at least one alphanumeric symbol.

33. The method of claim 31, wherein the plurality of sub-areas are visually separated.

34. The method of claim 31, wherein the specific information comprises an ASCII code corresponding to the visual indicator.